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SUBJECT: EU LEADERS NOTE JHA ACTION PLAN, LIST
PRIORITY ISSUES IN FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM

REF: USEU BRUSSELS 2166

SUMMARY

1. EU leaders in the June 16-17 European Council endorsed without discussion the draft conclusions put forward by the Luxembourg Presidency in the area of "Freedom, Security and Justice" (or Justice and Home Affairs, JHA). The conclusions basically note the adoption by the June 2 JHA Council (REFTEL) of the five-year Action Plan for implementing the Hague program of EU actions in the field of Freedom, Justice and Security, and a report by the JHA Council on the implementation of the EU Action Plan to combat terrorism.

THE HAGUE PROGRAM

2. The leaders noted the adoption by the June 2-3 EU JHA Council of the five-year Action Plan for implementing the Hague program of EU actions in the field of Freedom, Justice and Security. This blueprint translates the Hague program into specific EU measures in the fight against terrorism, migration management, visa policies, asylum, privacy and security, the fight against organized crime and criminal justice. The specific proposals for EU legislation will be tabled by the Commission in the months and years ahead (further details on http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice_home/news/information_dossiers/the_hague_priorities/index_en.htm). In view of the "growing importance of the external dimension in the area of freedom, security and justice," the plan will be supplemented by a strategy to be proposed by the Commission and Council SG/HR Solana.

3. The leaders underlined "the prime importance that Member States should implement the various measures" under the action plan "effectively and within the deadlines." Noting that the JHA Council was reviewing the measures taken by the individual Member States to transpose and implement the EU Framework Decision on the European Arrest Warrant, the conclusions said, "that method of evaluation should in general be developed."

4. The conclusions underlined the emphasis in the Action Plan on operational cooperation between the various players involved in the EU's internal security, noting the "more operational character of recent work" by the EU Chiefs of Police Task Force, EUROPOL and EUROJUST, and welcoming the start of activities by the Agency for the Management of Operational cooperation at the EU's External Borders.

5. The leaders agreed to stake stock of the implementation of The Hague program during the second half of 2006.

FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM

6. The European Council also noted a report by the JHA Council on the implementation of the EU Action Plan to combat terrorism, stressing the importance of compliance with the deadlines for the entry into force of measures considered to be a priority for the effectiveness of the fight against terrorism. The Presidency conclusions commend "progress made on the legislative front in the area of the exchange of judicial and police information and the fight against the financing of terrorism." The European Council also noted "guidelines defined by the council for drawing up a strategy on radicalization and terrorist recruitment, including, among other things, the promotion at national level of dialogue between religions, the finalization of the peer

review of domestic anti-terrorism arrangements and the development of the analytical capacity within the Council Secretariat."

17. The European Council identified the following as priority issues for the second half of 2005:

QUOTE

-- Legislative proceedings to strengthen police and judicial cooperation, in particular, and as far as possible, concerning the exchange of information between police authorities, the evidence warrant, the retention of data on telecommunications traffic, and the exchange of information and cooperation on terrorist offences;

-- Further efforts to achieve a better sharing of strategic and operational information between Member States, and between the latter and the competent agencies and Services of the Union, in accordance with the Hague Program;

-- The drafting of the strategy and action plan on radicalization and terrorist recruitment, in the light of the guidelines defined by the Council;

-- Follow-up to the recommendations stemming from the peer review of domestic anti-terrorism arrangements;

-- Continued implementation of the strategy on the financing of terrorism, in particular by adopting a code of conduct to prevent the abuse of charitable organizations and by strengthening the procedures concerning the freezing of assets;

-- The strengthening of civil protection capabilities, particularly the medical resources available to deal with a bioterrorist attack, and the development of a rapid reaction capability based on the civil protection modules of the Member States;

-- The strengthening of political dialogue on terrorism with third countries, and of international cooperation in the fight against terrorism, in particular the adoption of the United Nations comprehensive convention on international terrorism;

-- The finalization of program of assistance for certain priority third countries to strengthen their anti-terrorist mechanisms, and the implementation, in that respect, of the network of experts responsible for responding to requests for technical assistance from third countries;

-- Customs cooperation measures to improve the security of the supply chain.

END TEXT

18. The European Council will assess the progress made and revise the EU Action Plan in the fight against terrorism at its meeting in December 2005.

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